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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage April 8-10 on the upcoming economic forum between the KMT and the Chinese Communist Party, in which former KMT Chairman Lien Chan will meet with Chinese President Hu Jintao again; the corruption scandal surrounding former Presidential Office Deputy Secretary-General Chen Che-nan, who was taken into custody last

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Friday; and the year-end Taipei and Kaohsiung mayoral race. The pro-independence "Taiwan Daily" ran a banner headline on its front page April 10 that read: "[Vice President] Annette Lu Is Concerned That Lien-Hu Meeting Will Be a Crisis for Taiwan."

2. In terms of editorials, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times," Taiwan's biggest daily, said the best way for Taiwan to counter China's false belief in the use of force against the island is for the Taiwan government to express its strong political position to warn Beijing not to take any rash advances militarily. An editorial in the pro-status quo "China Times" called on Beijing to view the notion of "one China, with each side having its own interpretation" with a positive attitude. An editorial in the limited-circulation, pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" criticized the upcoming Lien-Hu meeting, saying it is aimed at isolating and marginalizing President Chen Shui-bian's DPP government. End summary.

A) 'The Effective Way for Taiwan to Counterstrike China's False Belief in the Use of Force'

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 600,000] wrote in an editorial (4/10):

"... Taiwan has already shouldered too many responsibilities in maintaining the status quo across the Taiwan Strait, and it will be deadly constrained by China if it does not take any action now. This newspaper suggests that the Taiwan government, in addition to strengthening its national defense capabilities, proactively managing the island's investments in China, and preventing China from using the United-Front tactics to divide Taiwan, clearly express its strong political position. [Taiwan should let China know that] as long as Beijing decides to take any rash advances militarily, Taiwan pledges that it will effectively defend itself and make China pay a huge political price. This is the best way for Taiwan to counterstrike China's false belief in the use of force [against the island]."

B) "Beijing Should View the Discourse on 'One China, with Each Side Having Its Own Interpretation' with a Positive Attitude"

The pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] editorialized (4/10):

"... [KMT Chairman] Ma Ying-jeou's strategy of discourse is very clear; that is, he recovered President Chen's 'Five No's' pledge and made it equal to 'maintaining the status quo.' Then he nailed the DPP down using Chen's statement made during his recent meeting with Ma that he would 'show absolute respect' [if Beijing agrees to the notion of] 'one China, with each side having its own interpretation.' Ma also nailed Beijing down by quoting the latter's acceptance of 'one China, with each side having its own interpretation,' which could be found in the five-point consensus reached by [former KMT Chairman] Lien Chan and [Chinese President] Hu Jintao during their meeting last spring. It is obvious that neither Beijing nor the DPP is willing to state clearly that they accept the notion of 'one China, with each side having its own interpretation.' It is, however, also difficult for either of them to say 'sternly' that it opposes to the notion, because if any of them does so, it would be like labeling itself as the side that creates trouble, and that would give Ma the space to cut in. As a result, every party involved is watching closely how Beijing is going to do with the ball [now that it is in its court]."

C) "Lien-Hu Meet Aims to Divide Taiwan"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taiwan News" [circulation: 20,000] commented in an editorial (4/10):

"The opposition Chinese Nationalist Party and the People's Republic of China's ruling Chinese Communist Party will hold an economic and trade forum later this week, just prior to the scheduled visit by PRC State Chairman Hu Jintao to the United States to hold a summit

with U.S. President George W. Bush. ... The convention of the KMT-CCP forum in Shanghai and its timing is likewise politically calculated as a means to implement Beijing's 'divide-and-conquer' strategy, which aims to isolate and marginalize President Chen Shui-bian's DPP government. Thanks to the enthusiastic participation by the KMT, the forum also provides Hu with ample ammunition in his upcoming summit with United States President George W. Bush on April 20 to blame the continuation of the cross-strait stalemate on the 'unilateral refusal' of President Chen and the DPP government to engage in cross-strait talks. ...

"Although conducted in the name of peace, Lien's establishment of an alliance between the KMT and CCP against Taiwan's democratically elected-government runs the risk of permanently sabotaging Taiwan's national interests, national security, sovereignty and dignity. ... It is also essential that members of the international community be able to decipher the underlying content of Beijing's strategy of 'divide-and-conquer' and demand that the PRC engage in direct, equal and dignified negotiations with Taiwan's democratically elected government, which is the only mandated representative of our 23 million people."

YOUNG